

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and apparatus is disclosed for use with an object bearing a digitally watermarked image. The method includes operating a device, such as a hand-held device, to generate digital data representing the digitally watermarked image and to process the digital data to extract information encoded within the digitally watermarked image. The method further includes transmitting the extracted information through at least one of a wired or a wireless communication link towards a data processor located external to the hand-held device; receiving the extracted information at the data processor and operating the data processor to take some action based on the received information. The data processor receives the extracted information through a data communications network which may include or be coupled to the Internet. The extracted information may be expressive of a data communications network address, such as a WWW address, through which the data processor can be reached. The action taken by the data processor can include using the extracted information to access a database, and/or using the extracted information to verify an identity of the object, and/or using the extracted information to verify an identity of a person who is associated with the object, and/or using the extracted information to obtain information that is associated with a person who is associated with the object, and/or using the extracted information to verify an authenticity of the object. The action can also include transmitting information from the data processor for reception by the hand-held device, and for possible display by the hand-held device. One or more taggants can be used in the substrate that bears the digitally watermarked image for encoding additional information.